

## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. **(Previously presented)** An easily dispersible cake of precipitated silica, wherein the precipitated silica has a BET specific surface area of at least 220 m<sup>2</sup>/g, and wherein when ion-exchange water is added to the easily dispersible cake to provide an aqueous dispersion of the silica with a concentration of 5% by weight, said dispersion being stirred with a propeller mixer to affect a preliminary dispersion, a resultant slurry being treated to be dispersed with a high-pressure homogenizer once at a processing pressure of 78 MPa, and further being diluted to reduce the silica concentration to 1.5% by weight, a resultant dispersion has a light-scattering index (n-value) of at least 2.
2. **(Currently amended)** ~~An~~ The easily dispersible cake of precipitated silica according to Claim 1, having a water content within a range of 83-93% by weight.
3. **(Previously presented)** A process for producing the easily dispersible cake of precipitated silica according to Claim 1, comprising using a liquid selected from the group consisting of aqueous alkali silicate solution, alkaline aqueous solution of which pH is adjusted with a basic substance, and water as an initial reaction liquid,  
wherein said process comprises simultaneously adding an alkali silicate and a mineral acid to a reaction liquid of which pH is being maintained at a fixed value within a range of 7.5-11.5, and of which temperature is being maintained at not lower than 90°C, whereby forming precipitated silica through their reaction; and separating said precipitated silica from said reaction liquid in wet state.
4. **(Currently amended)** The process for producing ~~an~~ the easily dispersible cake of precipitated silica according to Claim 3, wherein a concentration of silica solid in a reaction mixture at an ending time of the reaction is not higher than 50 g/L.
5. **(Currently amended)** A dispersion of precipitated silica which is characterized by being

comprising a dispersion of ~~an~~ the easily dispersible cake of precipitated silica ~~as described in~~ according to Claim 1 in a polar solvent, wherein ~~the~~ an average particle size of ~~the~~ precipitated silica particles present in the dispersion ~~being~~ is not greater than 300 nm, and ~~the~~ a ratio of aggregated particles having a particle size ~~equaling~~ equal to or more than 500 nm ~~being~~ is not higher than 5% by volume.

6. **(Currently amended)** A The dispersion of precipitated silica according to Claim 5, ~~in~~ which further comprising a cationic polymer ~~is dispersed~~.

7. **(Currently amended)** A process for preparing the dispersion of precipitated silica ~~of~~ according to Claim 5, comprising ~~subjecting~~ in which a silica slurry, formed by dispersing ~~a~~ the cake of precipitated silica in ~~a~~ the polar solvent, ~~is subjected~~ to a fine pulverization treatment with a ~~high pressure~~ high-pressure homogenizer, ~~, wherein the cake of precipitated silica is characterized by having BET specific surface area of at least 220 m<sup>2</sup>/g and when it is dispersed in ion-exchange water to provide an aqueous dispersion of the silica of 5% by weight in concentration and further diluted to reduce the silica concentration to 1.5% by weight, the dispersion having a light scattering index (n-value) of at least 2.~~

8. **(Currently amended)** A process for preparing ~~a~~ the dispersion of precipitated silica according to Claim 6, comprising ~~subjecting~~ in which a liquid premixture, formed by dispersing ~~a~~ the cake of precipitated silica and the cationic polymer in ~~a~~ the polar solvent, ~~is subjected~~ to a fine pulverization treatment with a high-pressure ~~high-pressure~~ homogenizer, ~~, wherein the cake of precipitated silica is characterized by having BET specific surface area of at least 220 m<sup>2</sup>/g and when it is dispersed in ion-exchange water to provide an aqueous dispersion of the silica of 5% by weight in concentration and further diluted to reduce the silica concentration to 1.5% by weight, the dispersion having a light scattering index (n-value) of at least 2.~~

9. **(Currently amended)** A coating liquid for an ink-jet recording sheet, which is ~~characterized by being obtained by dispersing the easily dispersible cake of precipitate silica~~

according to ~~of~~ Claim 1 and a binder in a polar solvent,

wherein and the ~~a~~ percent transmission of the coating liquid, as measured after diluting the same to the silica concentration of 1.5% by weight, ~~is being~~ at least 20%.

10. **(Currently amended)** A ~~The~~ coating liquid for the ink-jet recording sheet according to Claim 9, ~~which further~~ comprising ~~comprises~~ a cationic polymer.

11. **(Currently amended)** A process for making ~~a~~ the coating liquid for the ink-jet recording sheet ~~of~~ according to Claim 9, ~~comprising~~ which is characterized by dispersing ~~a~~ the cake of precipitated silica and ~~a~~ the binder in ~~a~~ the polar solvent, ~~wherein the cake of precipitated silica is characterized by having BET specific surface area of at least 220 m<sup>2</sup>/g and when it is dispersed in ion-exchange water to provide an aqueous dispersion of the silica of 5% by weight in concentration and further diluted to reduce the silica concentration to 1.5% by weight, the dispersion having a light scattering index (n value) of at least 2.~~

12. **(Currently amended)** A process for making ~~a~~ the coating liquid for the ink-jet recording sheet ~~of~~ according to Claim 10, ~~comprising~~ which is characterized by dispersing ~~a~~ the cake of precipitated silica, the cationic polymer and the binder in ~~a~~ the polar solvent, ~~wherein the cake of precipitated silica is characterized by having BET specific surface area of at least 220 m<sup>2</sup>/g and when it is dispersed in ion-exchange water to provide an aqueous dispersion of the silica of 5% by weight in concentration and further diluted to reduce the silica concentration to 1.5% by weight, the dispersion having a light scattering index (n value) of at least 2.~~